

Fate of big leaf maples in Whiteaker up in the air

■ **Eugene:** Some of the trees are suffering from decay and poor pruning, urban foresters say.

By JAIME LYN REA
The Register-Guard

The big leaf maples that line Adams Street from Third to Sixth avenues give the Whiteaker neighborhood a special ambience. Branches reach over the street and create a canopy of shade for residents, who frequently refer to the towering maples as simply "The Street Trees."

But some of the trees' days may be numbered, a group of 17 Whiteaker residents learned Sunday as they met with a pair of urban foresters below the 70- and 80-year-old maples.

Pete Seda, an urban forester and certified arborist from Ashland hired by the city to study

the trees, told the group that 31 trees in the three-block stretch have been identified as hazardous — and 11 of them probably should be removed because they pose a serious danger if they were to fall.

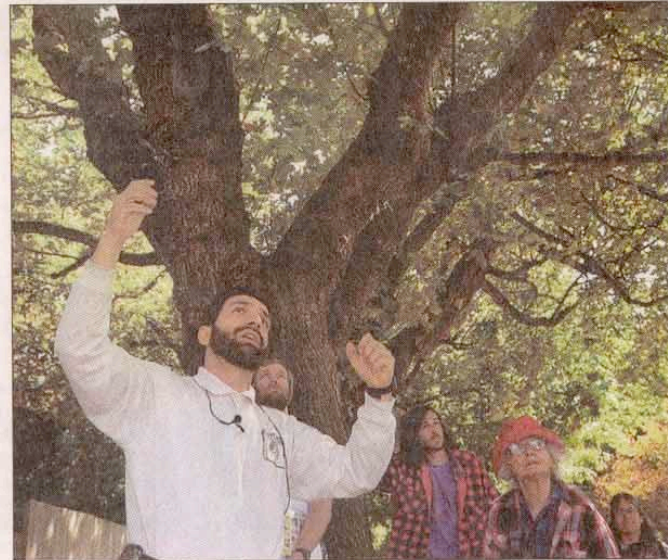
Some of the trees are suffering from severe decay or poor pruning, while others have been attacked by fungus, Seda said. A "hazardous" tree is not necessarily a dying tree, he said, but doing nothing about them creates a liability for the city.

Despite such concerns, no decision has yet been made about the trees' fate, said Mark Snyder, Eugene's urban forester.

"We haven't come to any conclusions yet," he said. "We don't have a schedule. I'm willing to be flexible."

Seda said that to "fire up the chain saw and cut them all down" is the easy solution to

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Pete Seda, an urban forester, talks about the fate of the big leaf maples along Adams Street in Eugene's Whiteaker neighborhood. Some of the trees are damaged and may have to be taken down.